

Communications Report April 2025

Press releases and media relations: Since October 2024, ASOR Communications has expanded its marketing and communications strategies and output. The concept of press releases has been revived, particularly relating to Cultural Heritage Initiatives and highlighting achievements of members, with the intention of allocating a designated section on the website for press releases to be stored. Likewise, ASOR Communications has reached out to members of the media for press release distribution, and is developing an updated media contact list.

Social media: There is increased coordination among social media accounts, with scheduled posts, themes, increasing our daily content output, and increasing our profile of Cultural Heritage Initiatives with regular posts highlighting previous projects. A CHI-related blog post from February 4 was highlighted on social media and received 2.7k likes and 23 shares on Facebook. Added to our social media portfolio with a BlueSky account, which started in January, and now has 358 followers and is another platform that members have been communicating with us and sharing our work, calls for papers, issues of the Ancient Near East Today, and fellowship opportunities. Increased monitoring and engagement with followers on ASOR's social media accounts.

Worked to create themes with hashtags and amplified ASOR's social media presence on LinkedIn for better visibility on a professional platform with consistent messaging and content creation. The number of LinkedIn followers in particular has grown 70% since May 2024, while ASOR's Instagram account has seen a 30% increase in followers:

ASOR Social Media Stats

Platforms	Followers as of 5/5/24	Followers as of 4/24/25	Growth (%)
Instagram	1,891	2,457	566 (30%)
Facebook	18,290	18,560	270 (1.5%)
LinkedIn	832	1,413	581 (70%)
Twitter	~7,130	7,227	97 (1.4%)
Bluesky	Created 1/21/25	364	

Internal and external communications: Identified and finessed consistent, clear language for membership and development-related communications, including in newsletters and website content, as well as donor and fundraising campaign communications. Assisted in the development of the anniversary logo, and working on an interactive ASOR history timeline to be posted on the website. Worked with Membership Coordinator to develop a membership survey

for members to provide feedback on ASOR-related memories and content for use during the anniversary celebration.

Added signage and communications for the Annual Meeting in Boston.

Upcoming plans:

- Develop and implement a clear and functional year-round communications schedule;
- Foster closer relations with media and work to develop article ideas, interview opportunities, and awareness for ASOR and the Annual Meeting;
- Continue to work on publishing and highlighting Cultural Heritage Initiative content, including video material and a potential upcoming podcast project;
- Creating a writing and language style guide for ASOR to develop a consistent voice and guideline that is accessible for ASOR staff when developing communications pieces;
- Adding a visible section of the ASOR website to store press releases;
- Aid in the website's redesign;
- Implement analysis tools of social media and web traffic for reassessing communications strategies;
- Increase membership survey opportunities (via email upon registration or membership renewal, for example.)

Friends of ASOR Report April 2025

Webinars: The Friends of ASOR programming has expanded and increased as well since October 2024. FOA webinars were designated as free as of 2024, which has increased registration and attendance – from attendance of between 20 to 70 attendees per session on average to more than 100 attendees on average per session; the highest attendance of the 2024-2025 season thus far was Geoff Emberling's Feb. 19 webinar, with 198 attendees at peak attendance. Increased promotion of the webinars has led to even greater registration and attendance, and initiated relationships with other institutions and academic societies. Fostering cross-promotion relationships with other institutions and academic societies: Bade Museum, Kelsey, Albright, CAARI, ISAC, EES, SARS, Getty Museum, Society for Ancient Medicine, AmSARC, among others.

Ancient Near East Today: Ancient Near East Today transitioned from its usual form as an emailed newsletter hosted on Informz to Substack, which aesthetically and logistically streamlined the process of putting together the newsletter, and is increasing our organic growth thanks to cross-promotion via the Substack application itself, other Substack newsletters that recommend us, and increased paid promotions on our social media channels. Subscriber count of FOA has increased from 17,300 in October 2024 to 18,100 in April 2025.

FOA Tours: Started FOA tour programming: A two-day tour will commence in Chicago in Sept. 2025 (currently has eight registrations) with visits to ISAC, the Art Institute and the Field Museum, along with walking tours and group meals planned.

Social Media: Created social media accounts for Ancient Near East Today: FB, Instagram, Twitter/X, and maintain daily posts for each account. A subscription box was added to the page for each article in Ancient Near East Today (on its new website as of 2024), requesting readers to subscribe to the FOA mailing list and to receive the free issues in their inbox. Posts, particularly related to the webinars and Ancient Near East Today, were boosted as paid promotions on Facebook.

FOA Ambassadors: In November 2024, we launched the “FOA Ambassadors” program as a rewards system to engage leaders and champions of FOA, and to help them encourage more registrations to the FOA mailing list. This involved developing personalized QR codes for each FOA Ambassador, sending out regular materials and reminders of webinars and issues of Ancient Near East Today.

Upcoming plans:

- Looking into potential archaeological tours in Cyprus, Turkey, Morocco, and Israel for 2026 and 2027;
- Looking into tours on the West Coast, Baltimore, D.C., elsewhere domestically for 2026;
- Continue collaborating with FOA Ambassadors for more ideas to reach students and encourage using FOA and ASOR educational resources material in the classrooms;
- Expand webinar offerings with different time zones and partner institutions (Albright, CAARI);
- Add special issues of Ancient Near East Today with book and museum review issues, as well as potential paid subscriber-only content;
- Develop and sustain a podcast dedicated to cultural heritage and Friends of ASOR-related content to supplement the webinar speaker schedule.